

# **ANNUAL SYNAR REPORT**

**42 U.S.C. 300x-26**

OMB № 0930-0222

**FFY 2026**

**State: Nebraska**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Annual Synar Report (ASR) format provides the means for states to comply with the reporting provisions of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x-26) and the Tobacco Regulation for the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant (SABG) (45 C.F.R. 96.130 (e)).

### **How the Synar report helps the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention**

In accordance with the tobacco regulations, states are required to provide detailed information on progress made in enforcing youth and young adult tobacco access laws (FFY 2025 Compliance Progress) and future plans to ensure compliance with the Synar requirements to reduce youth and young adult tobacco access rates (FFY 2026 Intended Use Plan). These data are required by 42 U.S.C. 300x-26 and will be used by the Secretary to evaluate state compliance with the statute. Part of the mission of the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) is to assist states<sup>1</sup> by supporting Synar activities and providing technical assistance helpful in determining the type of enforcement measures and control strategies that are most effective. This information is helpful to CSAP in improving technical assistance resources and expertise on enforcement efforts and tobacco control program support activities, including state Synar program support services, through an enhanced technical assistance program involving conferences and workshops, development of training materials and guidance documents, and onsite technical assistance consultation.

### **How the Synar report can help states**

The information gathered for the Synar report can help states describe and analyze substate needs for program enhancements. These data can also be used to report to the state legislature and other state and local organizations on progress made to date in enforcing youth and young adult tobacco access laws when aggregated statistical data from state Synar reports can demonstrate to the Secretary the national progress in reducing youth and young adult tobacco access problems. This information will also provide Congress with a better understanding of state progress in implementing Synar, including state difficulties and successes in enforcing retailer compliance

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<sup>1</sup>The term “state” is used to refer to all the states and territories required to comply with Synar as part of the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant Program requirements (42 U.S.C. 300x-64 and 45 C.F.R. 96.121).

with youth and young adult tobacco access laws.

### **Getting assistance in completing the Synar report**

If you have questions about programmatic issues, you may call CSAP's Division of Primary Prevention at (240) 276-2550 and ask for your respective State Project Officer, or contact your State Project Officer directly by telephone or email. If you have questions about fiscal or grants management issues, you may call your Grants Management Specialist in the Office of Financial Resources, Division of Grants Management, at (240) 276-1422.

### **Where and when to submit the Synar report**

The ASR must be received by SAMHSA no later than December 31, 2025 and must be submitted in the format specified by these instructions. Use of the approved format will avoid delays in the review and approval process. The chief executive officer (or an authorized designee) of the applicant organization must sign page one of the ASR certifying that the state has complied with all reporting requirements.


The state must upload one copy of the ASR using the online WebBGAS (Block Grant Application System). In addition, the following items must be uploaded to WebBGAS:

- FFY 2026 Synar Survey Results: States that use the Synar Survey Estimation System (SSES) must upload one copy of *SSES Tables 1–8* (in Excel) to WebBGAS. **Please note that, in the FFY 2026 ASR, SSES will generate Tables 6, 7, and 8, which are based on the optional microdata on product type, retail outlet type, and whether identification was requested. If your state does not submit these optional data, Tables 6, 7, and 8 will be blank. Tables 6, 7, and 8 are generated for the convenience of the state, and states are not required to submit completed versions of Tables 6, 7, or 8.** States that do not use SSES must upload one copy of ASR Forms 1, 4, and 5, and Forms 2 and 3, if applicable, (in Excel), as well as a database with the raw inspection data to WebBGAS.
- Synar Inspection Form: States must upload one blank copy of the inspection form used to record the result of each Synar inspection.
- Synar Inspection Protocol: States must upload a copy of the protocol used to train inspection teams on conducting and reporting the results of the Synar inspections. This document should be different than the Appendix C attached to the Annual Synar Report.
- A scanned copy of the signed Funding Agreements/Certifications

Each state SSA Director has been emailed a login ID and password to log onto the Synar section of the WebBGAS site.

## FFY 2026: FUNDING AGREEMENTS/CERTIFICATIONS

The following form must be signed by the Chief Executive Officer or an authorized designee and submitted with this application. Documentation authorizing a designee must be attached to the application.

<b>PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES ACT AND SYNAR AMENDMENT</b>	
42 U.S.C. 300x-26 requires each state to submit an annual report of its progress in meeting the requirements of the Synar Amendment and its implementing regulation (45 C.F.R. 96.130) to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. By signing below, the chief executive officer (or an authorized designee) of the applicant organization certifies that the state has complied with these reporting requirements and the certifications as set forth below.	
<b>SYNAR SURVEY SAMPLING METHODOLOGY</b>	
The state certifies that the Synar survey sampling methodology on file with the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention and submitted with the Annual Synar Report for FFY 2026 is up-to-date and approved by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.	
<b>SYNAR SURVEY INSPECTION PROTOCOL</b>	
The state certifies that the Synar Survey Inspection Protocol on file with the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention and submitted with the Annual Synar Report for FFY 2026 is up-to-date and approved by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.	
<b>State: Nebraska</b>	
<b>Name of Chief Executive Officer or Designee: Thomas Janousek, PsyD</b>	
<b>Signature of CEO or Designee:</b> 	
<b>Title:</b> Director	<b>Date Signed:</b> 12/29/2025
<b>If signed by a designee, a copy of the designation must be attached.</b>	

**SECTION I: FFY 2025 (Compliance Progress)**

**YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT ACCESS LAWS, ACTIVITIES, AND ENFORCEMENT**

42 U.S.C. 300x-26 requires the states to report information regarding the sale/distribution of tobacco products to individuals under age 21.

**1. Please indicate any changes or additions to the state tobacco statute(s) relating to youth and young adult access since the last reporting year. If any changes were made to the state law(s) since the last reporting year, please upload a copy of the state law to WebBGAS. (see 42 U.S.C. 300x-26).**

**a. Has there been a change in the minimum sale age for tobacco products?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, current minimum age:*  19  20  21

**b. Have there been any changes in state law that impact the state’s protocol for conducting Synar inspections?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, indicate change. (Check all that apply.)*

- Changed to require that law enforcement conduct inspections of tobacco outlets
- Changed to make it illegal for youth and young adults to possess, purchase or receive tobacco
- Changed to require ID to purchase tobacco
- Changed definition of tobacco products
- Other change(s) *(Please describe.)* \_\_\_\_\_

**c. Have there been any changes in state law that impact the following?**

- Licensing of tobacco vendors  Yes  No
- Penalties for sales to minors  Yes  No
- Vending machines  Yes  No
- Added product categories to youth and young adult access law  Yes  No

**2. Describe how the Annual Synar Report (see 45 C.F.R. 96.130(e)) was made public within the state prior to submission of the ASR. (Check all that apply.)**

- Placed on file for public review
- Posted on a state agency Web site *(Please provide exact Web address and the date when the FFY 2026 ASR was posted to this Web address.)*

*Web address: https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Behavioral-Health.aspx*

*Date published: 12/16/2025*

- Notice published in a newspaper or newsletter

- Public hearing
- Announced in a news release, a press conference, or discussed in a media interview
- Distributed for review as part of the SABG application process
- Distributed through the public library system
- Published in an annual register
- Other (Please describe.) The results of the FFY26 Annual Synar Report were presented to the Joint Advisory Committee. A powerpoint with data from ASR Tables 1 through 8 were included.

**3. Identify the following agency or agencies (see 42 U.S.C. 300x-26 and 45 C.F.R. 96.130).**

**a. The state agency(ies) designated by the Governor for oversight of the Synar requirements:**

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Division of Behavioral Health

Has this changed since last year's Annual Synar Report?

Yes  No

**b. The state agency(ies) responsible for conducting random, unannounced Synar inspections:**

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Division of Behavioral Health in collaboration with Nebraska State Patrol

Has this changed since last year's Annual Synar Report?

Yes  No

**c. The state agency(ies) responsible for enforcing youth and young adult tobacco access law(s):**

Nebraska State Patrol

Has this changed since last year's Annual Synar Report?

Yes  No

**4. Identify the following agencies and describe their relationship with the agency responsible for the oversight of the Synar requirements.**

**a. Identify the state agency responsible for tobacco prevention activities (the agency that receives the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Tobacco Control Program funding).**

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Division of Public Health, Health Promotion Unit, Tobacco Free Nebraska

**b. Has the responsible agency changed since last year's Annual Synar Report?**

Yes  No

**c. Describe the coordination and collaboration that occur between the agency**

**responsible for tobacco prevention and the agency responsible for oversight of the Synar requirements. (Check all that apply.) The two agencies**

- Are the same
- Have a formal written memorandum of agreement
- Have an informal partnership
- Conduct joint planning activities
- Combine resources
- Have other collaborative arrangement(s) *(Please describe.)* \_\_\_\_\_
- No relationship

**d. Does a state agency contract with the Food and Drug Administration’s Center for Tobacco Products (FDA/CTP) to enforce the youth and young adult access and advertising restrictions in the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act?**

- Yes  No (if no, go to Question 5)

**e. If yes, identify the state agency responsible for enforcing the youth and young adult access and advertising restrictions in the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act (the agency that is under contract to the Food and Drug Administration’s Center for Tobacco Products (FDA/CTP)).**

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**f. Has the responsible agency changed since last year’s Annual Synar Report?**

- Yes  No

**g. Describe the coordination and collaboration that occur between the agency contracted with the FDA to enforce federal youth and young adult tobacco access laws and the agency responsible for oversight of the Synar requirements. (Check all that apply.) The two agencies:**

- Are the same
- Have a formal written memorandum of agreement
- Have an informal partnership
- Conduct joint planning activities
- Combine resources
- Have other collaborative arrangement(s) *(Please describe.)* \_\_\_\_\_
- No relationship

**h. Does the state use data from the FDA enforcement inspections for Synar survey reporting?**

- Yes  No

5. Please answer the following questions regarding the state’s activities to enforce the state’s youth and young adult access to tobacco law(s) in FFY 2025 (see 42 U.S.C. 300x-26 and 45 C.F.R. 96.130(e)).

a. Which one of the following describes the enforcement of state youth and young adult access to tobacco laws carried out in your state? (Check one category only.)

- Enforcement is conducted exclusively by local law enforcement agencies.
- Enforcement is conducted exclusively by state agency(ies).
- Enforcement is conducted by both local *and* state agencies.

b. The following items concern penalties imposed for all violations of state youth and young adult access to tobacco laws by **LOCAL AND/OR STATE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES (this does not include enforcement of local laws or federal youth and young adult tobacco access laws).** Please fill in the number requested. If state law does not allow for an item, please mark “NA” (not applicable). If a response for an item is unknown, please mark “UNK.” The chart must be filled in completely.

PENALTY	OWNERS	CLERKS	TOTAL
Number of <u>citations issued</u>	UNK	44	UNK
Number of <u>finest assessed</u>	UNK	UNK	UNK
Number of <u>permits/licenses suspended</u>	UNK		UNK
Number of <u>permits/licenses revoked</u>	UNK		UNK
Other (Please describe.)	UNK	UNK	UNK

c. Are citations or warnings issued to retailers or clerks who sell tobacco to minors for inspections that are part of the Synar survey?

- Yes     No

If “Yes” to 5c, please describe the state’s procedure for minimizing risk of bias to the survey results from retailers alerting each other to the presence of the survey teams:

NEB. REV. STAT 28-1419 states that the sale of tobacco to a person under twenty one years of age is a class 3 misdemeanor. Therefore, law enforcement must cite an individual, (i.e. clerk, manager or owner) for the criminal violation. The issuance takes place at the time of the offense to ensure the person responsible for the sale is cited.

Synar inspections are conducted monthly from April through September based on a random selection of outlets, in order to reduce/eliminate potential bias of survey results. The sample of outlets are kept confidential and the cooperating youth does not know the location of the intended visits until the date of the visit. If it is 6 determined that a youth has prior “knowledge” of a clerk or of a town being

selected for the list then the youth is not used and another youth is scheduled. To the best of our knowledge, no merchant notification is occurring.

**d. Which one of the following best describes the level of enforcement of state youth and young adult access to tobacco laws carried out in your state? (Check one category only.)**

- Enforcement is conducted only at those outlets randomly selected for the Synar survey.
- Enforcement is conducted only at a subset of outlets not randomly selected for the Synar survey.
- Enforcement is conducted at a combination of outlets randomly selected for the Synar survey and outlets not randomly selected for the Synar survey.

**e. Did every tobacco outlet in the state receive at least one compliance check that included enforcement of the state youth and young adult tobacco access law(s) in the last year?**

- Yes  No

**f. What additional activities are conducted in your state to support enforcement and compliance with state youth and young adult tobacco access law(s)? (Check all that apply and briefly describe each activity in the text boxes below each activity.)**

- Merchant education and/or training

Community coalitions help educate retailers and raise awareness about tobacco regulations, their purpose, and the consequences of non-compliance.

- Incentives for merchants who are in compliance (e.g., nonenforcement compliance checks in which compliant retailers are given positive reinforcement and noncompliant retailers are warned about youth and young adult access laws)

- Community education regarding youth and young adult access laws

A summary of the state's laws related to legal age for tobacco purchase/use and retailer responsibility to enforce youth access laws are sent annually to all county and municipality clerks.

TFN and DBH both provide inspection data to Nebraska's Counter Tools mapping software. Use of this program allows DHHS to house local, state and federal inspection results

- Media use to publicize compliance inspection results

In addition to posting the ASR results, local coalitions utilize media outlets such as websites, press releases and newspaper ads to highlight retailers that are in

compliance with the state laws. Coalitions conducting retailer compliance checks utilize (earned) media advocacy strategies to inform the public about these results by issuing news releases noting the retailers who were found in compliance and/or those who were not.

- Community mobilization to increase support for retailer compliance with youth and young adult access laws

TFN partners with the DBH to mobilize community education, outreach, and support activities related to youth tobacco issues.

- Other activities (*Please list.*) Approach to Policy

A variety of state policies are in place to protect youth access and to prohibit the sale of tobacco (including smokeless and electronic nicotine delivery systems) products to a minor. Nebraska law states any individual or licensee who gives or furnishes tobacco products to a person under twenty-one years of age is guilty of a Class III misdemeanor. Passed into law in August of 2020, and effective as of October 1, 2020, the legal purchasing age is raised to twenty-one years of age. Although there is not a state product placement law, several communities in Nebraska have adopted local ordinances requiring that tobacco products are behind the counter or locked up. Additionally, several corporate entities with retail tobacco outlets in Nebraska have signed Assurances of Voluntary Compliance with the Nebraska Attorney Generals' office to restrict product placement in their outlets. Each agreement also includes multiple provisions to reduce youth access to tobacco including: hiring and training policies for employees; internal compliance checks and other types of corporate self-monitoring; vendor assisted sales; and enforcement mechanisms. Nebraska's Clean Indoor Air Act also protects the public health and welfare by prohibiting smoking and e-cigarette use in public places and places of employment.

Passed as part of LB727 on June 6, 2023, the final language establishes the state's first ever tax on e-cigarettes.

## SYNAR SURVEY METHODS AND RESULTS

The following questions pertain to the survey methodology and results of the Synar survey used by the state to meet the requirements of the Synar Regulation in FFY 2025 (see 42 U.S.C. 300x-26 and 45 C.F.R. 96.130).

**6. Has the sampling methodology changed from the previous year?**

Yes  No

*The state is required to have an approved up-to-date description of the Synar sampling methodology on file with CSAP. Please submit a copy of your Synar Survey Sampling Methodology (Appendix B). If the sampling methodology changed from the previous reporting year, these changes must be reflected in the methodology submitted.*

**a. If yes, describe how and when this change was communicated to SAMHSA**

**7. Please answer the following questions regarding the state's annual random, unannounced inspections of tobacco outlets (see 45 C.F.R. 96.130(d)(2)).**

**a. Did the state use the optional Synar Survey Estimation System (SSES) to analyze the Synar survey data?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, upload a copy of SSES tables 1–8 (in Excel) to WebBGAS. Then go to Question 8. If No, continue to Question 7b.*

**b. Report the weighted and unweighted Retailer Violation Rate (RVR) estimates, the standard error, accuracy rate (number of eligible outlets divided by the total number of sampled outlets), and completion rate (number of eligible outlets inspected divided by the total number of eligible outlets).**

Unweighted RVR \_\_\_\_\_

Weighted RVR \_\_\_\_\_

Standard error (s.e.) of the (weighted) RVR \_\_\_\_\_

Fill in the blanks to calculate the right limit of the right-sided 95% confidence interval.

RVR Estimate      +      (1.645      ×      )      =  
plus      (1.645      times      Standard Error )      equals      Right Limit

Accuracy rate \_\_\_\_\_

Completion rate \_\_\_\_\_

c. **Fill out Form 1 in Appendix A (Forms 1–5).** *(Required regardless of the sample design.)*

d. **How were the (weighted) RVR estimate and its standard error obtained?**  
*(Check the one that applies.)*

- Form 2 (Optional) in Appendix A (Forms 1–5) *(Attach completed Form 2.)*  
 Other *(Please specify. Provide formulas and calculations or attach and explain the program code and output with description of all variable names.)*

e. **If stratification was used, did any strata in the sample contain only one outlet or cluster this year?**

- Yes  No  No stratification

*If Yes, explain how this situation was dealt with in variance estimation.*

f. **Was a cluster sample design used?**

- Yes  No

*If Yes, fill out and attach Form 3 in Appendix A (Forms 1–5), and answer the following question.*

*If No, go to Question 7g.*

**Were any certainty primary sampling units selected this year?**

- Yes  No

*If Yes, explain how the certainty clusters were dealt with in variance estimation.*

g. **Report the following outlet sample sizes for the Synar survey.**

	Sample Size
<b>Effective sample size</b> (sample size needed to meet the SAMHSA precision requirement assuming simple random sampling)	
<b>Target sample size</b> (the product of the effective sample size and the design effect)	
<b>Original sample size</b> (inflated sample size of the target sample to counter the sample attrition due to ineligibility and noncompletion)	
<b>Eligible sample size</b> (number of outlets found to be eligible in the sample)	
<b>Final sample size</b> (number of eligible outlets in the sample for which an inspection was completed)	

h. **Fill out Form 4 in Appendix A (Forms 1–5).**

**8. Did the state’s Synar survey use a list frame?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, answer the following questions about its coverage.*

**a. The calendar year of the latest Sampling frame coverage study: 2023**

**b. Percent coverage from the latest Sampling frame coverage study: 95.2%**

**c. Was a new study conducted in this reporting period?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, please complete Appendix D (List Sampling Frame Coverage Study) and submit it with the Annual Synar Report.*

**d. The calendar year of the next coverage study planned: 2026**

**9. Has the Synar survey inspection protocol changed from the previous year?**

Yes  No

*The state is required to have an approved up-to-date description of the Synar inspection protocol on file with CSAP. Please submit a copy of your Synar Survey Inspection Protocol (Appendix C). If the inspection protocol changed from the previous year, these changes must be reflected in the protocol submitted.*

**a. If Yes, describe how and when this change was communicated to SAMHSA**

**b. Provide the inspection period: From 06/06/2025 to 09/22/2025**  
MM/DD/YY MM/DD/YY

**c. Provide the number of youth and young adult inspectors used in the current inspection year:**

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NOTE: If the state uses SSES, please ensure that the number reported in 9b matches that reported in SSES Table 4, or explain any difference.

**d. Fill out and attach Form 5 in Appendix A (Forms 1–5). (Not required if the state used SSES to analyze the Synar survey data.)**

## SECTION II: FFY 2026 (Intended Use):

Public Law 42 U.S.C. 300x-26 of the Public Health Service Act and 45 C.F.R. 96.130 (e) (4, 5) require that the states provide information on future plans to ensure compliance with the Synar requirements to reduce youth and young adult tobacco access.

**1. In the upcoming year, does the state anticipate any changes in:**

- Synar sampling methodology  Yes  No  
Synar inspection protocol  Yes  No

*If changes are made in either the Synar sampling methodology or the Synar inspection protocol, the state is required to obtain approval from CSAP prior to implementation of the change and file an updated Synar Survey Sampling Methodology (Appendix B) or an updated Synar Survey Inspection Protocol (Appendix C), as appropriate.*

**2. Please describe the state's plans to maintain and/or reduce the target rate for Synar inspections to be completed in FFY 2026. Include a brief description of plans for law enforcement efforts to enforce youth and young adult tobacco access laws, activities that support law enforcement efforts to enforce youth and young adult tobacco access laws, and any anticipated changes in youth and young adult tobacco access legislation or regulation in the state.**

To continue reducing the retailer violation rate, the Division of Behavioral Health through its state and local partnerships will implement a four-part strategy. First, community grantees of both DBH and the Tobacco Free Nebraska will educate local tobacco licensees about retailer compliance with State and Federal law. Through its Partnership For Success grant, DBH will also send all licensed tobacco outlets We Card signage to promote both retailer and consumer education. Second, subgrantees will conduct environmental scans to notify partners about licensees that are engaged in potentially unethical and/or unlawful conduct as it relates to the sales and marketing of tobacco products. Third, DBH will continue to fund additional nonSynar tobacco compliance checks and encourage subrecipients to locally publish violations to establish credible deterrence. Fourth, DBH will fund school-based and alternative programming for youth to discourage initiation of vaping and other tobacco product use.

**3. Describe any challenges the state faces in complying with the Synar regulation. (Check all that apply and describe each challenge in the text box below it.)**

- Limited resources for law enforcement of youth and young adult access laws

- Limited resources for activities to support enforcement and compliance with youth and young adult tobacco access laws

- Limitations in the state youth and young adult tobacco access laws

- Limited public support for enforcement of youth and young adult tobacco access laws

- Limitations on completeness/accuracy of list of tobacco outlets

- Limited expertise in survey methodology

- Laws/regulations limiting the use of minors in tobacco inspections

- Difficulties recruiting youth and young adult inspectors

In 2023, Nebraska was approved by its federal partner to only recruit individuals aged 19 or 20 to conduct Synar tobacco compliance checks. This requirement is a substantial recruitment burden because these individuals do not universally attend schools/colleges nor is this a common age of individuals in local recruitment pools. Also, recruitment of these two age-years (19 and 20) means that there is not systematic enforcement of sales involving even younger persons.

- Issues regarding the balance of inspections conducted by youth inspectors age 15 and under

- Issues regarding the balance of inspections conducted by one gender of youth and young adult inspectors

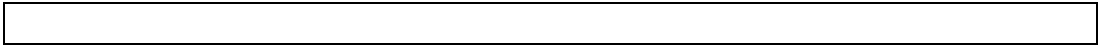
- Geographic, demographic, and logistical considerations in conducting inspections

Distances between communities, especially in western Nebraska, make conducting inspections by the Nebraska State Patrol particularly difficult. It is common for many communities to have just one inspection and the travel time from the patrol officers' base to be several hours each way

- Cultural factors (e.g., language barriers, young people purchasing for their elders)

- Issues regarding sources of tobacco under tribal jurisdiction

- Other challenges (*Please list.*)



## APPENDIX A: FORMS 1–5

### FORM 1 (Required for all states not using the Synar Survey Estimation System (SSES) to analyze the Synar Survey data)

Complete Form 1 to report sampling frame and sample information and to calculate the unweighted retailer violation rate (RVR) using results from the current year’s Synar survey inspections.

**Instructions for Completing Form 1:** In the top right-hand corner of the form, provide the state name and reporting federal fiscal year (FFY 2026). Provide the remaining information by stratum if stratification was used. Make copies of the form if additional rows are needed to list all the strata.

Column 1: *If stratification was used:*

1(a) Sequentially number each row.

1(b) Write in the name of each stratum. All strata in the state must be listed.

*If no stratification was used:*

1(a) Leave blank.

1(b) Write “state” in the first row (indicates that the whole state is a single stratum).

*Note for unstratified samples: For Columns 2–5, wherever the instruction refers to “each stratum,” report the specified information for the state as a whole.*

Column 2: 2(a) Report the number of over-the-counter (OTC) outlets in the sampling frame in each stratum.

2(b) Report the number of vending machine (VM) outlets in the sampling frame in each stratum.

2(c) Report the combined total of OTC and VM outlets in the sampling frame in each stratum.

Column 3: 3(a) Report the estimated number of eligible OTC outlets in the OTC outlet population in each stratum.

3(b) Report the estimated number of eligible VM outlets in the VM outlet population in each stratum.

3(c) Report the combined total estimated number of eligible OTC and VM outlets in the total outlet population in each stratum.

*The estimates for Column 3 can be obtained from the Synar survey sample as the weighted sum of eligible outlets by outlet type.*

Column 4: 4(a) Report the number of eligible OTC outlets for which an inspection was completed, for each stratum.

4(b) Report the numbers of eligible VM outlets for which an inspection was completed, for each stratum.

4(c) Report the combined total of eligible OTC and VM outlets for which an inspection was completed, for each stratum.

Column 5: 5(a) Report the number of OTC outlets found in violation of the law as a result of completed inspections, for each stratum.

5(b) Report the number of VM outlets found in violation of the law as a result of completed inspections, for each stratum.

5(c) Report the combined total of OTC and VM outlets found in violation of the law as a result of completed inspections, for each stratum.

Totals: For each subcolumn (a–c) in Columns 2–5, provide totals for the state as a whole in the last row of the table. These numbers will be the sum of the numbers in each row for the respective column.



## **FORM 2 (Optional)**

### **Appropriate for stratified simple or systematic random sampling designs.**

Complete Form 2 to calculate the weighted RVR. This table (in Excel form) is designed to calculate the weighted RVR for stratified simple or systematic random sampling designs, accounting for ineligible outlets and noncomplete inspections encountered during the annual Synar survey.

**Instructions for Completing Form 2:** In the top right-hand corner of the form, provide the state name and reporting federal fiscal year (FFY 2026).

- Column 1: Write in the name of each stratum into which the sample was divided. These should match the strata reported in Column 1(b) of Form 1.
- Column 2: Report the number of outlets in the sampling frame in each stratum. These numbers should match the numbers reported for the respective strata in Column 2(c) of Form 1.
- Column 3: Report the original sample size (the number of outlets originally selected, *including* substitutes or replacements) for each stratum.
- Column 4: Report the number of sample outlets in each stratum that were found to be eligible during the inspections. Note that this number must be less than or equal to the number reported in Column 3 for the respective strata.
- Column 5: Report the number of eligible outlets in each stratum for which an inspection was completed. Note that this number must be less than or equal to the number reported in Column 4. These numbers should match the numbers reported in Column 4(c) of Form 1 for the respective strata.
- Column 6: Report the number of eligible outlets inspected in each stratum that were found in violation. These numbers should match the numbers reported in Column 5(c) of Form 1 for the stratum.
- Column 7: Form 2 (in Excel form) will automatically calculate the stratum RVR for each stratum in this column. This is calculated by dividing the number of inspected eligible outlets found in violation (Column 6) by the number of inspected eligible outlets (Column 5). The state unweighted RVR will be shown in the Total row of Column 7.
- Column 8: Form 2 (in Excel form) will automatically calculate the estimated number of eligible outlets in the population for each stratum. This calculation is made by multiplying the number of outlets in the sampling frame (Column 2) times the number of eligible outlets (Column 4) divided by the original sample size (Column 3). Note that these numbers will be less than or equal to the numbers in Column 2.
- Column 9: Form 2 (in Excel form) will automatically calculate the relative stratum weight by dividing the estimated number of eligible outlets in the population for each stratum in Column 8 by the Total of the values in Column 8.
- Column 10: Form 2 (in Excel form) will automatically calculate each stratum's contribution to the state weighted RVR by multiplying the stratum RVR (Column 7) by the relative stratum weight (Column 9). The weighted RVR for the state will be shown in the Total row of Column 10.
- Column 11: Form 2 (in Excel form) automatically calculates the standard error of each stratum's RVR (Column 7). The standard error for the state weighted RVR will be shown in the Total row of Column 11.
- TOTAL: For Columns 2–6, Form 2 (in Excel form) provides totals for the state as a whole in the last row of the table. For Columns 7–11, it calculates the respective statistic for the state as a whole.

**FORM 2 (Optional) Appropriate for stratified simple or systematic random sampling designs.**

Calculation of Weighted Retailer Violation Rate										
										State: _____
										FFY: <u>2026</u>
(1) Stratum Name	(2) N Number of Outlets in Sampling Frame	(3) n Original Sample Size	(4) n1 Number of Sample Outlets Found Eligible	(5) n2 Number of Outlets Inspected	(6) x Number of Outlets Found in Violation	(7) p=x/n2 Stratum Retailer Violation Rate	(8) N'=N(n1/n) Estimated Number of Eligible Outlets in Population	(9) w=N'/Total Column 8 Relative Stratum Weight	(10) pw Stratum Contribution to State Weighted RVR	(11) s.e. Standard Error of Stratum RVR
<b>Total</b>										

- N - number of outlets in sampling frame
- n - original sample size (number of outlets in the original sample)
- n1 - number of sample outlets that were found to be eligible
- n2 - number of eligible outlets that were inspected
- x - number of inspected outlets that were found in violation
- p - stratum retailer violation rate (p=x/n2)
- N' - estimated number of eligible outlets in population (N'=N\*n1/n)
- w - relative stratum weight (w=N'/Total Column 8)
- pw - stratum contribution to the weighted RVR
- s.e. - standard error of the stratum RVR



**FORM 4 (Required for all states not using the Synar Survey Estimation System [SSES] to analyze the Synar Survey data)**

Complete Form 4 to provide detailed tallies of ineligible sample outlets by reasons for ineligibility and detailed tallies of eligible sample outlets with noncomplete inspections by reasons for noncompletion.

**Instructions for Completing Form 4:** In the top right-hand corner of the form, provide the state name and reporting federal fiscal year (FFY 2026).

Column 1(a): Enter the number of sample outlets found ineligible for inspection by reason for ineligibility. Provide the total number of ineligible outlets in the row marked “Total.”

Column 2(a): Enter the number of eligible sample outlets with noncomplete inspections by reason for noncompletion. Provide the total number of eligible outlets with noncomplete inspections in the row marked “Total.”

<b>Inspection Tallies by Reason of Ineligibility or Noncompletion</b>			
		State: _____	
		FFY: 2026	
(1) INELIGIBLE		(2) ELIGIBLE	
Reason for Ineligibility	(a) Counts	Reason for Noncompletion	(a) Counts
Out of business		In operation but closed at time of visit	
Does not sell tobacco products		Unsafe to access	
Inaccessible by youth or young adult		Presence of police	
Private club or private residence		Youth or young adult inspector knows salesperson	
Temporary closure		Moved to new location	
Unlocatable		Drive-thru only/youth or young adult inspector has no driver’s license	
Wholesale only/Carton sale only		Tobacco out of stock	
Vending machine broken		Ran out of time	
Duplicate		Other noncompletion reason(s) <i>(Describe.)</i>	
Other ineligibility reason(s) <i>(Describe.)</i>			
<b>Total</b>		<b>Total</b>	

**FORM 5 (Required for all states not using the Synar Survey Estimation System [SSES] to analyze the Synar survey data)**

Complete Form 5 to show the distribution of outlet inspection results by age and gender of the youth and young adult inspectors.

**Instructions for Completing Form 5:** In the top right-hand corner of the form, provide the state name and reporting federal fiscal year (FFY 2026).

Column 1: Enter the number of attempted buys by youth and young adult inspector age and gender.

Column 2: Enter the number of successful buys by youth and young adult inspector age and gender.

If the inspectors are age eligible but the gender of the inspector is unknown, include those inspections in the “Other” row. Calculate subtotals for males and females in rows marked “Male Subtotal” and “Female Subtotal.” Sum subtotals for Male, Female, and Other and record in the bottom row marked “Total.” Verify that that the total of attempted buys and successful buys equals the total for Column 4(c) and Column 5(c), respectively, on Form 1. If the totals do not match, please explain any discrepancies.

<b>Synar Survey Inspector Characteristics</b>		
		<b>State:</b> _____
		<b>FFY:</b> 2026 _____
	(1) Attempted Buys	(2) Successful Buys
<b>Male</b>		
15 years		
16 years		
17 years		
18 years		
19 years		
20 years		
<b>Male Subtotal</b>		
<b>Female</b>		
15 years		
16 years		
17 years		
18 years		
19 years		
20 years		
<b>Female Subtotal</b>		
<b>Other</b>		
<b>Total</b>		

## **APPENDIXES B & C: FORMS**

### Instructions

Appendix B (Sampling Design) and Appendix C (Inspection Protocol) are to reflect the state's CSAP-approved sampling design and inspection protocol. These appendixes, therefore, should generally describe the design and protocol and, with the exception of Question #10 of Appendix B, are not to be modified with year-specific information. Please note that any changes to either appendix must receive CSAP's advance, written approval. To facilitate the state's completion of this section, simply cut and paste the previously approved sampling design (Appendix B) and inspection protocol (Appendix C) and respond to Question #10 of Appendix B to provide the requested information about sample size calculations for the Synar survey conducted in FFY 2025.

## APPENDIX B: SYNAR SURVEY SAMPLING METHODOLOGY

State: Nebraska  
 FFY: 2026

**1. What type of sampling frame is used?**

- List frame *(Go to Question 2.)*
- Area frame *(Go to Question 3.)*
- List-assisted area frame *(Go to Question 2.)*

**2. List all sources of the list frame. Indicate the type of source from the list below. Provide a brief description of the frame source. Explain how the lists are updated (method), including how new outlets are identified and added to the frame. In addition, explain how often the lists are updated (cycle). *(After completing this question, go to Question 4.)***

*Use the corresponding number to indicate Type of Source in the table below.*

- 1 – Statewide commercial business list
- 4 – Statewide retail license/permit list
- 2 – Local commercial business list
- 5 – Statewide liquor license/permit list
- 3 – Statewide tobacco license/permit list
- 6 – Other

Name of Frame Source	Type of Source	Description	Updating Method and Cycle
Municipal and County Clerks	3	Data is collected continuously by the Department of Revenue who then provides the licensee list to the Division of Behavioral Health by February each year. Tobacco licenses expire December 31 of each year	Data is collected continuously by the Department of Revenue who then provides the licensee list to the Division of Behavioral Health by February each year. Tobacco licenses expire December 31 of each year.

**3. If an area frame is used, describe how area sampling units are defined and formed.**

N/A

**a. Is any area left out in the formation of the area frame?**

- Yes    No

*If Yes, what percentage of the state's population is not covered by the area frame?*

\_\_\_\_%

**4. Federal regulation requires that vending machines be inspected as part of the Synar survey. Are vending machines included in the Synar survey?**

- Yes    No

If **No**, please indicate the reason(s) they are not included in the Synar survey. Please check all that apply.

- State law bans vending machines.
- State law bans vending machines from locations accessible to youth and young adults.
- State has a contract with the FDA and is actively enforcing the vending machine requirements of the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act.
- Other (Please describe.) \_\_\_\_\_

If **Yes**, please indicate how likely it is that vending machines will be sampled.

- Vending machines are sampled separately to ensure vending machines are included in the sample
- Vending machines are sampled together with over the counter outlets, so it is possible that no vending machines were sampled, however they are included in the sampling frame and have a non-zero probability of selection
- Other reasons (Please describe.) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Which category below best describes the sample design? (Check only one.)

- Census** (STOP HERE: Appendix B is complete.)

**Unstratified statewide sample:**

- Simple random sample (Go to Question 9.)
- Systematic random sample (Go to Question 6.)
- Single-stage cluster sample (Go to Question 8.)
- Multistage cluster sample (Go to Question 8.)

**Stratified sample:**

- Simple random sample (Go to Question 7.)
- Systematic random sample (Go to Question 6.)
- Single-stage cluster sample (Go to Question 7.)
- Multistage cluster sample (Go to Question 7.)
- Other** (Please describe and go to Question 9.) \_\_\_\_\_

6. Describe the systematic sampling methods. (After completing Question 6, go to Question 7 if stratification is used. Otherwise go to Question 9.)

7. Provide the following information about stratification.

a. Provide a full description of the strata that are created.

Seven strata, covering each of the State's 93 counties, are used in accordance with the Nebraska State Patrol Troop Areas. Troop Area A is split into separate strata. The use of State Patrol Troop Areas provides a convenient method of handling

Synar investigation as officers are assigned by Patrol Troop area and can work with local young adults to conduct compliance checks.

- Troop Area A (Omaha) – City of Omaha is the densest stratum both in terms of population and tobacco outlets per square mile.
- Troop Area A - Non-Omaha includes 5 mostly urban, east central counties excluding the City of Omaha. The stratum includes the third largest city, Bellevue.
- Troop Area B – in northeastern Nebraska includes two mid-sized towns of Norfolk and Columbus and 18 mostly rural and frontier counties.
- Troop Area C in southcentral Nebraska includes the fourth largest city, Grand Island, as well as the mid-sized town of Kearney. The remaining counties are mostly rural.
- Troop Area D in western Nebraska spans the entire latitude of the state. The stratum includes the mid-sized town of North Platte. The remaining counties are mostly frontier.
- Troop Area E is located in the western-most counties and Panhandle region of the state. Scotts Bluff with less than 15,000 people, is the largest community. There are 10 other frontier and rural counties.
- Troop Area H is in southeast Nebraska and includes the capital and second largest city, Lincoln, as well as 13 mostly rural counties.

**b. Is clustering used within the stratified sample?**

- Yes** (Go to Question 8.)  
 **No** (Go to Question 9.)

**8. Provide the following information about clustering.**

- a. Provide a full description of how clusters are formed. (If multistage clusters are used, give definitions of clusters at each stage.)**

- b. Specify the sampling method (simple random, systematic, or probability proportional to size sampling) for each stage of sampling and describe how the method(s) is (are) implemented.**

**9. Provide the following information about determining the Synar Sample.**

- a. Was the Synar Survey Estimation System (SSES) used to calculate the sample size?**

- Yes** (Respond to part b.)  
 **No** (Respond to part c and Question 10c.)

**b. SSES Sample Size Calculator used?**

- State Level *(Respond to Question 10a.)*
- Stratum Level *(Respond to Question 10a and 10b.)*

**c. Provide the formulas for determining the effective, target, and original outlet sample sizes.**

**10. Provide the following information about sample size calculations for the Synar survey conducted in FFY 2025.**

**a. If the state uses the sample size formulas embedded in the SSES Sample Size Calculator to calculate the state level sample size, please provide the following information:**

**Inputs for Effective Sample Size:**

RVR: 5.8%  
 Frame Size: 2,532

**Input for Target Sample Size:**

Design Effect: 1

**Inputs for Original Sample Size:**

Safety Margin: 50%  
 Accuracy (Eligibility) Rate: 98.90%  
 Completion Rate: 98.80%

**b. If the state uses the sample size formulas embedded in the SSES Sample Size Calculator to calculate the stratum level sample sizes, please provide the stratum level information:**

Stratum ID	Stratum size	Stratum RVR		Stratum Sample Size
		2008	Cost weight of inspections	[Proportional]
Troop H	577			54
Omaha	486			46
Troop B	374			35
Troop D	335			31
Troop C	328			31
Troop A	251			24
Troop E	181			17

**c. If the state does not use the sample size formulas embedded in the SSES Sample Size Calculator, please provide all inputs required to calculate the effective, target, and original sample sizes as indicated in Question 9.**

# APPENDIX C: SYNAR SURVEY INSPECTION PROTOCOL SUMMARY

State: Nebraska  
FFY: 2026

*Note: Upload to WebBGAS a copy of the Synar inspection form under the heading “Synar Inspection Form” and a copy of the protocol used to train inspection teams on conducting and reporting the results of the Synar inspections under the heading “Synar Inspection Protocol.”*

## 1. How does the state Synar survey protocol address the following?

### a. Consummated buy attempts?

- Required
- Permitted under specified circumstances (Describe:      )
- Not permitted

### b. Youth and young adult inspectors to carry ID?

- Required
- Permitted under specified circumstances (Describe:      )
- Not permitted

### c. Adult inspectors to enter the outlet?

- Required
- Permitted under specified circumstances (Describe: Entrance into the outlet by adult inspectors would be permissible in situations where parking does not allow for direct view of the transaction, if there is concern for the safety of the cooperating individual, or where there have been previous cases of difficulty at a particular merchant location)
- Not permitted

### d. Youth and young adult inspectors to be compensated?

- Required
- Permitted under specified circumstances (Describe:      )
- Not permitted

## 2. Identify the agency(ies) or entity(ies) that actually conduct the random, unannounced Synar inspections of tobacco outlets. (Check all that apply.)

- Law enforcement agency(ies)
- State or local government agency(ies) other than law enforcement
- Private contractor(s)
- Other

List the agency name(s): Nebraska State Patrol

**3. Are Synar inspections combined with law enforcement efforts (i.e., do law enforcement representatives issue warnings or citations to retailers found in violation of the law at the time of the inspection?)?**

Always    Usually    Sometimes    Rarely    Never

**4. Describe the type of tobacco products that are requested during Synar inspections.**

**a. What type of tobacco products are requested during the inspection?**

- Cigarettes
- Small Cigars
- Cigarillos
- Smokeless Tobacco
- Electronic Cigarettes/Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS)
- Other

**b. Describe the protocol for identifying what types of products and what brands of products are requested during an inspection.**

**5a. Describe the methods used to recruit, select, and train adult supervisors.**

All inspectors are certified law enforcement officers who have received training on the required procedures for tobacco compliance checks. Each year the guidelines and any new information are provided to officers who are already trained. New inspectors are assigned to inspectors with experience to “learn by doing”. Cooperating individuals are trained by an officer regarding proper procedures and protocols.”

Most of the tobacco compliance checks conducted by the Nebraska State Patrol are completed by investigators that are assigned to the Liquor Division. The inspection process for alcohol compliance and tobacco compliance checks are nearly identical, which helps to ensure that the investigators have experience in this area.

**5b. Describe the methods used to recruit, select, and train youth and young adult inspectors.**

Officers from each troop region are tasked with recruiting young adults aged 19 or 20 as cooperating individuals. Many of the CIs are kin to or acquaintances of law enforcement agents. CIs must not look older than their age. The person is not actively assigned to a diversion program, is not a party to a pending criminal proceeding or a proceeding under the Nebraska Juvenile Code, and is not on probation.

The officer trains the individuals one on one by reviewing the responsibilities and the protocol for cooperating individuals as outlined in the document *Guidelines for Using Underage Cooperating Individuals During Tobacco Compliance Checks*. CIs are trained to wear wires so that accompanying (out of sight) officers know what is happening and are

assured of the CI's safety. Both the person and person's valid identification are photographed. When the officer is confident that the individual can complete the assigned task the officer and individual then begin conducting inspections.

**6. Are there specific legal or procedural requirements instituted by the state to address the issue of youth and young adult inspectors' immunity when conducting inspections?**

**a. Legal**

Yes  No

*(If Yes, please describe.)*

Any person under the age of twenty-one years acting in accordance with and under the authority of Nebraska revised statute 28-1419 shall not represent that he or she is of the age of twenty-one years or older. If the person is under 19 years of age, parental consent is required. The person must be an employee, volunteer, or an intern with a state or local law enforcement agency. The person is not actively assigned to a diversion program, is not a party to a pending criminal proceeding or a proceeding under the Nebraska Juvenile Code, and is not on probation. The person does not use or consume tobacco product as part of their duties (NEB. REV. STAT. § 28-1419 (2020)).

**b. Procedural**

Yes  No

*(If Yes, please describe.)*

As indicated in the document titled *Guidelines for Using Underage Cooperating Individuals During Tobacco Compliance Checks*, CIs are instructed not to use a disguise that makes them appear older than they actually are and to only use their own personal, valid identification, i.e., driver's license, state I.D., etc. Both the person and person's valid identification are photographed. CI's shall produce their valid identification if requested. Departing from the guidelines is grounds for dismissal as a CI.

Law enforcement listen through a wire and remain in close proximity during the buy attempt to provide a secondhand account of the interaction between the CI and clerk.

The officer must take possession of the evidence from the CI upon leaving the retail establishment.

**7. Are there specific legal or procedural requirements instituted by the state to address the issue of the safety of youth and young adult inspectors during all aspects of the Synar inspection process?**

**a. Legal**

Yes  No

*(If Yes, please describe.)*

**b. Procedural**

Yes  No

*(If Yes, please describe.)*

As indicated in the document titled *Guidelines for Using Underage Cooperating Individuals During Tobacco Compliance Checks*, ensure CI safety by monitoring the CI's conversation with a transmitter or other equipment if practical. The officer remains near the buy attempt to ensure the safety of the CI.

**8. Are there any other legal or procedural requirements the state has regarding how inspections are to be conducted (e.g., age of youth and young adult inspector, time of inspections, training that must occur)?**

**a. Legal**

Yes  No

*(If Yes, please describe.)*

Inspectors must be at least 15 but under the age of 21. (NEB. REV. STAT. § 28-1419 (2020))

**b. Procedural**

Yes  No

*(If Yes, please describe.)*

**SSES Table 1 (Synar Survey Estimates and Sample Sizes)**

**CSAP-SYNAR REPORT**

State	NE
Federal Fiscal Year (FFY)	2026
Date	11/4/2025 22:25
Data	SYNAR Compliance Check_Cleaned_2025.xlsx
Program Version	Version 7.0
Analysis Option	Stratified SRS with FPC

**Estimates**

Unweighted Retailer Violation Rate	15.1%
Weighted Retailer Violation Rate	15.1%
Standard Error	1.9%
Is SAMHSA Precision Requirement met?	NO
Right-sided 95% Confidence Interval	[0.0%, 18.2%]
Two-sided 95% Confidence Interval	[11.3%, 18.9%]
Design Effect	1.0
Accuracy Rate (unweighted)	93.5%
Accuracy Rate (weighted)	93.5%
Completion Rate (unweighted)	92.4%

**Sample Size for Current Year**

Effective Sample Size	143
Target (Minimum) Sample Size	143
Original Sample Size	337
Eligible Sample Size	315
Final Sample Size	291
Overall Sampling Rate	12.4%